

## REMARKS

In response to the Official Action dated May 23, 2002, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the following amendments and remarks. Please amend the application as follows.

The Examiner in the Official Action has rejected claims 24-24( I assume was 25 was meant here), 28-31, and 51-53 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kara (US 5,819,240) (Kara 1), in view of Kara (US 5,717,597) (Kara 2) for the reasons set forth on pages 8-11. In this regard, applicants respectfully submit that the invention as currently set forth by the amended claims are not taught or suggested by Kara 1 and/or Kara 2 either individually or in combination. The independent claims, as set forth, are directed to a system, method or software for ordering or customizing an official postal stamp. Independent claims 1, 32, 42, 49, 50, 52, and 54 all include the limitation that the official postal stamp is customized by a user that incorporates an image provided by the user. An important part of the customized personalized images on a stamp that can be used freely by the user or by other individuals. It is desirable that the personal images be a part of the official postal stamp and not a metered stamp printed on a label or envelope. In both Kara 1 and Kara 2, these references are directed to metered stamps as opposed to actual official postal stamps that incorporate personal images. In particular, applicants refers to the abstract of Kara 1, column 1, lines 30-36 and column 2, lines 12-30. As can be seen from these passages Kara 1 teaches away from the use of stamps and discusses many of the disadvantages of providing official postal stamps. This is in complete contrast to the present invention which is directed to official postal stamps. The same objection arises with Kara 2. In particular, see the abstract and column 1, lines 50-65. As can be seen from Kara 2, it is undesirable to provide stamps which are both inconvenient and inefficient.

Applicants have provided an invention whereby personal images can be used on official postal stamps and which overcome many of the problems of the prior art. In particular, the present invention requires an authorized agency to assure that the appropriate images are being provided and also produces an official postal stamp which can be used by anyone for the mailing of letters, etc. including the user that ordered the stamps or a recipient that receives the stamps

from the user. The stamps of the present invention are fungible and useable by a variety of users thereby allowing the original user to use the stamps not only as official postage but as a means for placing envelopes to be returned to the user and associating the user with a particular product in which the stamp is placed. The authorizing agency also assures that appropriate images are provided on the official stamp. Kara 1 and Kara 2 teach away from the present invention. In particular, Kara 1 and Kara 2 are directed to meter type stamps that are placed directly on the product to be mailed and/or labeled that is used in mailing. However, there is no teaching or suggestion of providing an official postal stamp that can be used by anyone that incorporates images supplied by the user as taught and claimed by applicants. Thus, it would not be obvious to modify either of the Kara references to produce the product as taught and claimed by applicants and as previously discussed these references teach away from providing of an official postal product incorporating images by a user as is taught and claimed by applicants.

With regard to independent claim 55, there is disclosed a system for customizing official postal stamps that allows a user to customize an official postal stamp. Here again, the present invention is directed to customizing an official postal stamp that is fungible as any other official postal stamp. In addition, claim 55 provides the ability for the user to modify at least a portion of the image. Since only a portion of the image may be used, this allows the user to be able to obtain an image that has been pre-approved for producing an official postal stamp. Thus, if there is an area of an image that the user would like to select from a number of prestored images, the present invention allows the user to do this remotely. It is respectfully submitted that this is not taught or suggested by Kara 1 or Kara 2. As previously noted, the Kara 1 and Kara 2 are not directed to official postal stamps to which the present invention is directed.

In summary, applicants respectfully submits that the application in present form is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

The summary of the invention has been amended to correspond to the claims presently on file.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page(s) is captioned **"Version with Markings to Show Changes Made"**.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Pincelli', written over a horizontal line.

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**Version With Markings to Show Changes Made**

**In the Specification:**

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 2 has been amended as set forth below:

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention there is provided a system for ~~customizing an~~ordering a custom official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 4 has been amended as set forth below:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an official postal ~~product~~stamp from the at least one remote ordering system wherein the user provides an image for incorporation as part of the official postal stamp.

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 9 has been amended as set forth below:

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method for ordering a custom official postal stamp ~~postage~~ having a customized image thereon, comprising the steps of:

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 15 has been amended as set forth below:

b) providing the central authorizing computer system with a computer program for providing information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing ordering of ~~custom~~custom official postal stamp by a user

~~postage~~ from the at least one remote ordering system wherein the user provides an image for incorporation as part of the official postal stamp.

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 19 has been amended as set forth below:

In yet another aspect of the present invention there is provided a computer software product for use in ordering custom ~~postage~~official postal stamp, comprising a computer readable storage medium having a computer program for use on a central authorizing computer system capable of communication with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the computer software product which when loaded into an authorizing computer system causes the authorizing computer system to perform the following step of:

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 26 has been amended as set forth below:

providing the central authorizing computer system with a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing ordering of custom ~~postage~~official postal stamp by a user from the at least one remote ordering system wherein the user provides an image for incorporation as a part of the official postal stamp.

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 29 has been amended as set forth below:

In another aspect of the present invention there is provided a system for ordering customized ~~postage~~official postal stamp, comprising:

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 1 has been amended as set forth below:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the central

authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system by a user for allowing custom modification of an image for use on ~~postage~~customized official postal stamp.

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 6 has been amended as set forth below:

In still another aspect of the present invention there is provided a system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 8 has been amended as set forth below:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of ~~an a customized~~ official postal ~~product~~stamp from the at least one remote ordering system, and means for manipulation of the image for use on the customized official postal ~~product~~stamp.

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 14 has been amended as set forth below:

In another aspect of the present invention there is provided a system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 16 has been amended as set forth below:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an official postal ~~product~~stamp by a user from the at least one remote ordering

system, means for manipulation of the image by a user for use incorporation on the official postal ~~product~~stamp, and means for producing an order receipt for order of a postal ~~product~~stamp, the receipt having an identification bar code thereon.

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 24 has been amended as set forth below:

In yet another aspect of the present invention there is provided a system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

The paragraph beginning on page 6, line 26 has been amended as set forth below:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an official postal ~~product~~stamp by a user from the at least one remote ordering system, the central authorizing computer system having at least one ~~prestored~~ image provided by the user that can be used in a custom official postal ~~product~~stamp, means for manipulation or use of at least a portion of the prestored image for use on the custom official postal ~~product~~stamp.

The paragraph beginning on page 7, line 4 has been amended as set forth below:

In another aspect of the present invention there is provided a system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

The paragraph beginning on page 7, line 6 has been amended as set forth below:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, the central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to the at least one remote ordering system for allowing a user to

~~customize~~ ~~customizing~~ of an official postal ~~product~~ stamp from the at least one remote ordering system, the central authorizing computer system having at least one prestored image that can be used in a custom official postal ~~product~~ stamp, means for ~~use~~ using of at least a portion of the prestored image for use on the custom official postal ~~product~~ stamp thereby eliminating the need to obtain content approval before producing of the official postal ~~product~~ stamp.

**In the Claims:**

Claims 5 and 27 have been cancelled.

Claims and have been amended as set forth below:

1.(Once Amended) A system for ~~customizing an ordering a~~ custom official postal ~~product~~ stamp, comprising:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an official postal ~~product~~ stamp by a user from said at least one remote ordering system wherein the user provides an image for incorporation as a part of said official postal stamp.

4.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 1 wherein said information includes instructions on how to modify an image for use on a postal ~~product~~ stamp or for ordering said customized official postal ~~product~~ stamp.

~~5. A system according to claim 1 wherein said information includes a list of official postal product selections.~~

6.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 1 wherein said information includes a list of acceptable criteria for image content of images that can be used on said custom official postal ~~product~~ stamp.



7.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 1 wherein said information includes a selection menu for allowing selection of a prestored image for use on said custom official postal stamp postage.

13.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 9 wherein said customizing of said prestored image further includes the providing of text on said custom official postal stamp postage.

14.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 9 wherein said customizing of said custom image further includes the providing of text on said custom official postagepostal stamp.

15.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 1 wherein said information further includes providing a selection of a denomination from a predefined schedule of postal rates for said custom postageofficial postal stamp.

19.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 18 wherein said order form includes means for providing payment for said custom official postal stamp postage.

23.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 22 wherein said receipt includes one or more of the following: customer order identification, order information, facsimile of the image to be used on the custom official postal stamp postage.

24.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 8-1 wherein said computer program further comprises means for notifying said remote ordering system that the ~~custom~~ image submitted by said user has been authorized for use on said custom official postal stamp postage.

26.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 1 further comprising a printing device for printing said custom official postal ~~product~~stamp by said authorizing computer system.

~~27. A system according to claim 26 wherein said postal product is a postage stamp, postcard, or envelope.~~

29.(Once Amended) A system according to claim 6 further comprising means for manipulation of the image for use on said official postal ~~product~~stamp.

32.(Once Amended) A method for ordering a custom official postal stamp ~~postage~~ having a customized image thereon, comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a central authorizing computer system for communication with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network; and
- b) providing said central authorizing computer system with a computer program for providing information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing ordering of a custom official postal stamp by a user postage from said at least one remote ordering system wherein the user provides an image for incorporation as a part of said official postal stamp.

33.(Once Amended) A method according to claim 32 further comprising the step of:

ordering of said custom official postal stamp ~~postage~~ at said at least one remote ordering system based on instructions and selections provided by central authorizing computer system.

36.(Once Amended) A method according to claim 35 wherein said electronic receipt includes one or more of the following: customer order

identification, order information, facsimile of the image to be used on the customized official postal stamp~~postage~~.

39.(Once Amended) A method according to claim 38 further comprising the step of:

obtaining approval to use said image on said custom official postal stamp~~postage~~ from said central authorizing computer system.

40.(Once Amended) A method according to claim ~~39~~34 further comprising the step of:

printing said custom ~~postage~~official postal stamp in accordance with said ~~electron~~electronic order form after obtaining approval from said central authorizing computer system.

42.(Once Amended) A computer software product for use in ordering custom official postal stamp~~postage~~, comprising a computer readable storage medium having a computer program for use in a central authorizing computer system capable of communication with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said computer software product which when loaded into authorizing computer system causes the authorizing computer system to perform the step of:

providing said central authorizing computer system with a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing ordering of custom official postal stamp by a user~~postage~~ from said at least one remote ordering system wherein the user provides an image for incorporation as a part of said official postal stamp.

43.(Once Amended) A computer software product according to claim 42 wherein the computer software product further causes the computer to perform the additional step of:

ordering of said custom ~~postage~~official postal stamp at said at least one remote ordering system based on instructions and selections provided by central authorizing computer system.

45.(Once Amended) A computer software product according to claim 42 wherein the computer software product further causes the computer to perform the additional step of:

allowing said remote computer system to customize images for use in custom official postal products~~stamps~~.

46.(Once Amended) A computer software product according to claim 44 wherein said electronic receipt includes one or more of the following: customer order identification, order information, facsimile of the image to be used on the customized ~~postage~~official postal stamp.

48.(Once Amended) A computer software product according to claim 42 wherein the computer software product further causes the computer to perform the additional step of:

uploading a custom image from said remote ordering system to said central authorizing computer system in order to obtain approval to use said image on said customized official postal stamp~~postage~~.

49.(Once Amended) A system for ordering customized official postal stamp~~postage~~, comprising:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system by a user for allowing custom modification of an image for use on ~~postage~~customized official postal stamp.

50.(Once Amended) A system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an customized official postal ~~product~~stamp from said at least one remote ordering system, and means for manipulation of the image for use on said customized official postal ~~product~~stamp.

52.(Once Amended) A system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an official postal ~~product~~stamp by a user from said at least one remote ordering system, means for manipulation of the image by the user for ~~use~~incorporation on said official postal ~~product~~stamp and means for producing an order receipt for order of a postal ~~product~~stamp, said receipt having a identification bar code thereon.

54.(Once Amended) A system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing customizing of an official postal ~~product~~stamp by a user from said at least one remote ordering system, said central authorizing computer system having at least one ~~prestored~~ image provided by said user that can be used in a custom official postal ~~product~~stamp, means for manipulation or use of at least a portion of the prestored image for use on said custom official postal ~~product~~stamp.

55.(Once Amended) A system for customizing an official postal ~~product~~stamp, comprising:

a central authorizing computer system for communicating with at least one remote ordering system over a communication network, said central authorizing computer system having a computer program for forwarding information to said at least one remote ordering system for allowing a user to customize ~~customizing of~~ an official postal ~~product~~stamp from said at least one remote ordering system, said central authorizing computer system having at least one prestored image that can be used in a custom official postal ~~product~~stamp, means for ~~use using~~ of at least a portion of the prestored image for use on said custom official postal ~~product~~stamp thereby eliminating the need to obtain content approval before producing of said official postal ~~product~~stamp.

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